

Status Update: Water Quality Standards in California

Parameter: Biological Objectives

Status:

- The State Water Board is initiating the process to develop biological objectives for freshwater streams and rivers in California. Biological objectives will help improve water quality in our streams and rivers by providing the narrative or numeric benchmarks that describe conditions necessary to protect aquatic life beneficial uses.
- Three advisory groups have been formed to support the development of biological objectives: 1) a Stakeholder Advisory Group to ensure that overall stakeholder input is incorporated into the technical and policy elements; 2) a Scientific Advisory Group of external experts to review the technical aspects of this project, and 3) a Regulatory Advisory Group to ensure that the Biological Objectives meet the needs of the regulators and to ensure that these tools will be used correctly and equitably.

Milestones:

- Workplan completed in March 2010
- Stakeholder Advisory Group formed in March 2010.
- Scientific and Regulatory Advisory Groups formed in September 2010.
- Technical Work Element approved for key components including: Water body classification, Reference condition assessment, Stressor response models, and Stressor identification pilots.

Projected Dates:

- All the technical work will be completed by 1st Q FY13
- Review of technical work by Scientific Review Committee by 2nd Q FY13
- Share final technical documents with other advisory groups by 2nd Q FY13
- Development of draft policy and staff report by 3rd Q FY13
- Initiate peer review in 4th Q FY13
- Respond to Comments 4th Q FY13.
- CA State Board will consider adopting biological objectives and policy in 1st Q FY14.
- Adoption of biological objective and policy in 3rd Q FY14.

Criteria Values: TBD